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Introduction

The emergence of saadien movement at the beginning of the XVI th century, is a remarkable time for historians to the extent that they can base their research on written sources become more abundant, but also Moroccan Portuguese and Dutch. This fact is not fortuitous, it results from an affirmed will of the Saadians themselves: to develop a historiography as ideology and political support in order to legitimize their movement, initially considered by their opponents as rebel against the Makhzen , this specific central power of the Moroccan tradition, linked to the rupture of relations with the Abbasid caliphate by the Almohads and endowed with a tribal base. These sources have been well studied, first by Europeans at the beginning of the 20th century.th century, then by the new generation of Moroccan historians. Both have reached converging conclusions: the establishment of power by the Saadians marks a turning point in the history of Morocco. Their advent constitutes a break with the model of previous dynasties, in particular the Almoravids, Almohads and Merinids . The latter based their legitimacy on the " esprit de corps " or assabiyya according to the qualification given by Ibn Khaldoun. The Saadians, on the other hand, define their legitimacy by combining politics with religion, with the symbolic and determining support of the marabouts who offered this movement the soul of its existence and its political and social strength.

Researchers from the colonial historical school ruled in favor of the importance of the religious factor as an essential element in the historical evolution of Morocco, mainly based on the study of the functions of the zaouia , as a basic organism, and its influence in political and social life. The comparative study framework introduces an essential problem: " the dialectical relationship between the marabout movement and restructuring on the model of Hilalian tribalism " (A. Laroui). Hence the need to formulate questions to clarify the way in which the study of the advent of the Saadians is treated. To what extent is Maraboutism going beyond the Khaldoun model? And "when did Maraboutism succeed in annexing the second model " (A. Laroui)? In other words, can we speak, with the Saadian movement, of going beyond the heritage described and analyzed by Ibn Khaldoun? To provide some answers, it is important to take into account the diversity of sources and to favor the study of micro-history.

Contemporary studies of the Saadians pay great attention to a triad that explains their breakthrough and temporary success: maraboutism, sherifism and jihâd . These criteria are relevant, but they should not obscure others. It is important not to obscure the tribal structures of the Souss, the weight of the economic factor in the internal balance of power, the importance of the Portuguese economic penetration and domination in the emergence of the Jazouli marabout movement.. Historiographical issues remain open: Is it true that the role of the marabouts was to stabilize tribal tensions and maintain social order to form a bloc against the Portuguese conquest? Is it true that the population of Souss had to group together under the aegis of the Saadians to recover their lands from foreign invaders and free their economy from the monopoly of the Portuguese and their Arab collaborators? Where can I locate the mythical factor Saadian Chorfas, which arose as " the Mahdis mysticisants and as Imams heirs of Jazoulite heritage " (Mr. Kably).

A context of crisis conducive to Mahdism

The space that corresponds to contemporary Morocco has been, for centuries, a focal point in the conflict between Iberian Christians and Andalusian Muslims. Since the tenth century, he provided a large part of the armed forces when Muslims went on the offensive against Christians and he then carried the weight of the withdrawal when the scales turned in favor of Christians and when Muslims were forced to defend themselves against the Reconquista. From 1415, in fact, the Portuguese succeeded in seizing the strategic port of Ceuta; this event marks the reversal of Muslim supremacy in Andalusia and the start of modern European expansion. The capture of Ceuta is a fact which leaves a strong imprint in the memories, it causes a massive reaction among the Muslims and favors the entry into office of a new dynasty: the Banu Wattas . The latter appealed to the jihâd, with the aim of stopping the Iberian invasions and reclaiming the lost positions. They present themselves as reforming horsemen, consolidating the interior unity of the "Moroccan nation". They are trying to develop a new model of power which relays the one which emerged from the crisis of the Merinid political regime, in decline since the death of Abu Inan , considered by many historians as the last defender of the " land of the Muslims. " against Christians.

Despite the momentum given by the jihad, the Banu Wattas are unable to reconquer all of the lost territories, or even to coordinate structured military campaigns against the Christians. The Portuguese succeeded in establishing themselves on numerous coastal points, which served as supply posts for their ships and fortresses for raids carried out in the interior of the country. The dynasty's politico-religious authority weakened, as small independent entities emerged, organized by tribal chiefs, Sufi masters and city rulers. The Wattassids really only manage to control the Marinid capital, Fez, and its immediate surroundings. Their authority over distant regions, such as the Souss region, remains theoretical and even symbolic.Makhzen , and to establish their autonomy through raids against their neighbors or against the Portuguese forts. The general tendency is to wage these battles without the support of power: accounts of the time show that most mujahideen rely more on their faith than on military strategy and organization. They are notably led by the disciples of the great brotherhood of the Jazoulis.

The economy is undergoing a major upheaval: the loss of control of Saharan trade which made this region an intermediate place between black Africa and the northern Mediterranean. One of the social consequences is an imbalance between the nomadic tribes, who until then controlled the Saharan commercial circuits, and the sedentary tribes. In this context of global crisis, the influence of religious leaders is asserting itself. The dominant discourse, after the capture of Ceuta, remains focused on the need to consolidate the faith by fighting against " the Christian enemy " . The authors who give an account of this situation observe that, for many of their contemporaries, the crisis which has arisen does notland of Islam ” , either in the Maghreb or in Andalusia. Even in some hagiographic accounts, this crisis is presented as a " divine punishment " due to the evil deeds of Muslims after their successive defeats against Christians. Such a climate favors Mahdism, the belief in the imminent coming of the Islamic messiah, called the " Mahdi al-Muntadhar " , both liberator and reformer. This belief finds expression in the writings of many Sufis. The most famous among them is the XV th century, Mohammed Al-Jazouli , which makes educational programs, religious and policy by declaring "mahdi reformer ” , and by fighting Christians and their Muslim collaborators.

The Saadian movement: from traditional bay'a to jihâdiste bay'a

Saadian historiography focuses on the conditions for the advent of the Saadian movement. This is the case of the commentator Abderrahman al-Fassi in his work Zahret Echemarikh . At the turn of XVIII e - XIX th centuries, the historian Abu al-Kacim al-Zaini, in Atturjumana al-Kubra , indicates that the tribes of the Souss chose to consult and to support al-Qa'im because of his knowledge, for his piety and his zeal for the jihâd , but also because he has the title of sheriff and is a member of the Jazoulite brotherhood. The various pieces of information gathered make it possible to summarize the reasons explaining the advent of the Saadian movement: the weakness of the Makhzen; inter-tribal conflicts; Portuguese settlements on the southern coasts and the loss of the trans-Saharan trade monopoly; the dynamism of the Jazouli marabouts at a time when tribal structures are shaken; the expectation of the Mahdi, strongly felt in the autonomous Souss in relation to the dynasty. To these general data is added the recommendation made by the head of the zaouïa of Aqqa to recognize al-Qaim as responsible for the jihad.

The propaganda carried out by al-Qaim, before being appointed by the head of the zawiya of Aqqa, serves as a subsequent platform for his political campaign. He then appointed his two sons as military chiefs of operations against the Portuguese forts. *He obliges the chiefs of the tribes to declare his son Ahmed al-Araj , as emir and head of the military contingents. And to give his act political legitimacy and his movement momentum and sustainability, he formulates a political program, declaring that the reason for his project is to unify the Souss tribes under the aegis of a clairvoyant leader, defender of their interests against the Portuguese and their collaborators among the tribes of Oulad Jara. He insists, moreover, on the misfortunes of Muslims by explaining that they are the direct consequence of the weakness of the central power and its inability to lead the jihad against the " infidels " . In other words, he transforms the temporary nature of his designation as " head of the jihad " into a lasting investiture,* despite the fact that the Banu Wattas continue to represent the legitimate rulers, according to the legal formula of the Qur'anic bay'a expressed. by legal oath . It is the founding act of the Saadian movement.

Subsequent acts confirm al-Qaim's political project, the aim of which is not limited to leading the jihad in the Souss region, but to fighting in areas under Wattassid control and then battles against the Wattasids themselves. . Al-Qaim diverts the temporary bay'a from its initial principle by pushing his two sons to leave Souss to settle in areas under the control of the Makhzen . In 1524, Marrakech, the second capital of the

Wattassids, became Saadian thanks to the support of the head of the Jazoulite brotherhood, Abdallah Al-Gazouani , who stopped defending the Wattassids to rally the new masters of the jihâd. From 1525, the Saadian movement took the form of a " Muslim Emirate ". This act of installation in Marrakech proves the determination of the Saadians to go beyond their investiture as heads of the jihad and to present themselves as the new contenders for political power. They are, however, confronted with the fact that the legitimacy of the Wattassids has long been unanimous among the ulemas. The controversy erupts among the jurists of the court, to know if it is possible to appeal to the new strong man of the moment, proclaimed " Imâm " , and to his supporters. Traditionally, the mubayi must respect the clauses of the Koranic oath: defend the Muslim faith, and the " land of Islam " , lead the battles against the " infidels ", establish " divine justice ". With the exception of a few, the ulemas of the capital of the Banu Wattas therefore refuse to follow the tribes of southern Morocco who took the oath to the Saadians. According to their judgment, Mohamed Al Bourtougali, the Wattasid sultan, remains legitimate as long as he maintains the jihad against the Portuguese and maintains the faith; he also helped the Saadian princes in their first battles against the Portuguese. This controversy must be interpreted in a broader context, taking into account the eminent place of the ulemas of Fez in Moroccan intellectual life. Because of the cultural and historical importance of this city, they are considered as the referents of religious life and the guardians of the Muslim faith. The consequences are clear:, between 1549 and 1554Mohamed Al-cheikh executes all the Fassi ulemas who refused to pronounce the legitimacy of Saadian power.

To better understand the success of the Saadians, we must therefore insist on the nature of the choice of al-Qaim as head of the jihad and of the political and social forces which participated in his investiture. The marabouts are the leaders of the game, they lead the armed elements for the jihad, they ensure the propaganda which authorizes political changes. The zaouias, on which they lean, are not only places of worship, but also centers intended to form disciples capable, in times of crisis, of becoming political agents. If the traditional bay'a is essentially a process of legitimation which draws its influence and its value from the unanimity of representative institutions, the bay'aJihadist Saadians draws its influence and legitimacy from the support offered by the marabouts, who were able to introduce a new model of government based on religious principles. For many historians, the advent of the Saadian movement is only the political consecration of the program of the marabouts, hence the ambiguous nature of their power.

The zaouïa as a fundamental institution of the power of the Saadians

The zaouïa is a specific body which results from a long historical process. The beginnings of a movement Sufi appear in the XI thcentury, under the Almoravids. The spiritual aspect prevails at the beginning, but it does not prevent the Sufis from exerting their influence on all the components of the company. Religious leaders become arbiter of warring factions in inter-tribal conflicts. The zaouia, as far as the tribes recognize it, serves as the court of the tribal nations. As an institution that goes beyond them, it ends up embodying the foundation of political authority in a segmented society. It plays an essential role towards a new balance. It is this interpenetration of the religious, the economic, the social, the educational and the political which is at the origin of the tensions with the reigning dynasties, worried to see the field of their authority being reduced. The Mérinides are trying to stop this movement but, faced with setbacks, they see it gaining ground. The Sufis succeed in constituting autonomous cadres endowed with real power. The zaouïa represents the main institution of Saadian power. It is a strong moment in its history.

The weight of the Souss jazoulite zaouïa is decisive. Mohamed Ben Mobarak , head of the Aqqa zaouïa, and Baraka Ben Ali , head of the Tidssi zaouïa, two of the main leaders, play a decisive role in the inauguration of the Saadians. They unite their efforts to make this choice a reality through propaganda relayed by their followers throughout southern Morocco and well beyond. The role of the zaouïa is not limited to the political success of the Saadians, it is also exercised in the economic field, both being linked. At the time of famines and droughts, the Jazouli disciples are active in the countryside to provide for the needs of the destitute inhabitants. This strengthens the aura of the Saadians in their fight against the Makhzenestablished in Fez. As soon as the Saadians entered Marrakech in 1524, Abdallah al-Gazouani, grand sheikh of the brotherhood, became the conductor of the movement for their legitimation, either by leading the military battles against the Wattassids, or by organizing his disciples. to overcome the consequences of the crisis in the countryside. By the same token, it confers in return on the Jazouli marabouts the historical legitimacy so sought after since the advent of its founder, Mohamed al-Jazouli, who had fought for two decades to establish a political model capable of unifying the Muslims of the Maghreb and fighting Christians who came from the Iberian Peninsula on the basis of taalim-s

(" recommendations ") andadkar-s (" moral principles ") inspired by his mystical doctrine . Its principles were the quintessence of the Saadian political project, hence the importance of religion in the institution of this power.

The makhzen , until then in embryonic form, takes on a new dimension. Under Ahmed al-Mansour , he designates " both the functioning and the etiquette of the court " (MN Mouline), the organization and centralized administration of the State, as well as a mode of governance. The model " Makhzen saadien " is designed according to a specific hierarchy, or the Sultan stands as a core that centralizes all functions. The formal organization of the makhzen is presented in a pyramidal form: the vizier , the pashas , the caïds, and military administration. Bureaucracy is the dominant aspect of the system, but its vital foundation remains the army, with its various factions, multiple points of support and tribal reserves. From a symbolic point of view, the sultan is the supreme representative: all functions are concentrated in his hands, he is responsible for safeguarding common goods, he has a tax monopoly and is at the head of the military forces. So that the title of vizier quickly becomes honorary, it is awarded to dignitaries of the court and to close collaborators of the Sultan, among the most faithful. The makhzenSaadian, which uses the procedures of previous dynasties, derives its new power from the management of institutions inspired by the Iberian and Ottoman models: the authority is more centralized, the administration more efficient. It depends above all on the support of tribes and foreign military contingents. Some speak of a “ new Makhzen ” , of the renewal of traditional functions, of a “ Saadian political school ” which plays on symbols and claims absolute, even supernatural forms. It also uses another device, endowed with great efficiency, that of the title of “ Sovereign Chérif ” (MN Mouline).

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